AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the first paragraph of the specification with the following amended paragraph to reflect the updated status of the referenced patent applications:

This application is related to, but does not make a claim of priority from, U.S. patent application serial No. 10/659,983, filed September 10, 2003, now U.S. Patent No. 7,267,816, U.S. patent application serial No. 10/659,980, filed September 10, 2003, now U.S. Patent No. 7,270,957, U.S. patent application serial No. 10/659,948, filed September 10, 2003, and U.S. patent application serial No. 10/659,965, filed September 10, 2003, now abandoned, the contents of each of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety as if fully set forth.

Please replace the first paragraph of the Summary of the Invention (pp. 4-5 of the specification) with the following amended paragraph to properly identify the biological deposits made:

In an embodiment of the present invention, isolated bacteria or bacterial strains capable of oxidizing nitrite to nitrate are provided. In one embodiment, the 16S rDNA of the bacteria or bacterial strains has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7 or SEQ ID NO:8. The nucleotide sequences described as SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2 are exemplary of *Nitrococcus*-like NOB, and the nucleotide sequences described as SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7, and SEQ ID NO:8 are exemplary of *Nitrospira*-like NOB. The *Nitrococcus mobilis*-like NOB represented by SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2 have been deposited on August 28, 2003 with the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) located at 10801 University Boulevard, Manassas, VA 20110-2209 and have been assigned accession number PTA-5424. The *Nitrospira*-like NOB represented by SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:7, and SEQ ID NO:8 have been deposited on August 28, 2003 with the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) located at 10801 University Boulevard, Manassas, VA 20110-2209 and have been assigned accession number PTA-5422.

Please replace the last paragraph on page ~~17~~ 18 of the specification with the following amended

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